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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 SY-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 H-01 PA-01
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 TRSE-00 /070 W
----------039062 011826Z /46
O R 011749Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9389
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4129

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, CI
SUBJ: HUNGER STRIKE -- THREE RELATIVES DEPART EMBASSY ON SCHEDULE

REF: SANTIAGO 4096 (NOTAL)

1. MONICA ARAYA, ANA GONZALEZ AND MATILDE URRUTIA DE NERUDA DEPARTED THE EMBASSY SHORTLY BEFORE 1100 HOURS JUNE 1, HAVING COMPLETED 24 HOUR FAST IN SUPPORT OF THE DEMANDS OF RELATIVES OF DISAPPEARED PERSONS. THE THREE WOMEN CAUSED NO PROBLEMS OTHER THAN THE OBVIOUS DISRUPTION TO EMBASSY SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS. THE EMBASSY'S DOCTOR EXAMINED THE THREE THE EVENING OF MAY 31 AND AGAIN THE MORNING OF JUNE 1 AND FOUND THEM WELL.

2. THE WOMEN MET WITH AMBASSADOR LANDAU PRIOR TO DEPARTURE. THEY REITERATED THE DETERMINATION OF RELATIVES TO PERSIST IN THE PRESENT HUNGER STRIKE IN AN EFFORT TO FORCE THE GOC TO UNDERTAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO ACCOUNT FOR THE MISSING PERSONS. THEY SAID THAT THEY (THE THREE WOMEN) HAD CHOSEN OUR EMBASSY FOR THEIR 24 HOUR FAST BECAUSE OF OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE GOC. BUT, THEY WANTED US TO UNDERSTAND, THEY INTENDED NO ILL WILL AND THEY REGRETTED
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ANY INCONVENIENCE. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED STRONG SYMPATHY FOR THE PROBLEM OF THE RELATIVES AND THE BELIEF THAT THE GOC WAS COMING TO REALIZE THAT IT WOULD HAVE TO ADDRESS THE DISAPPEARED PROBLEM. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT ACTIONS SUCH AS THE 24 HOUR SIT-IN DID NOT STRENGTHEN OUR POSITION IN DISCUSSING HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS WITH THE GOC.

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3. PRESS AND RADIO COVERAGE OF THE SIT-IN WAS SURPRISINGLY LIGHT. "LA SEQUNDA" THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 31 CARRIED NO MENTION. OF THE PAPERS THIS MORNING ONLY "LA TERCERA" HEADLINED THE SIT-IN. "EL MERCURIO" AND GOC-OWNED "EL CRONISTA" GAVE IT BACK-PAGE TREATMENT.

4. COMMENT: SHORTLY AFTER THE THREE WOMEN BEGAN THEIR SIT-IN YESTERDAY THE LOCAL AGENCY FRANCE PRESSE OFFICE CALLED TO CONFIRM A STORY FROM PARIS THAT THEY WERE IN THE EMBASSY. THAT THE WOMEN WERE COMMITTED TO STAY FOR THEIR ANNOUNCED 24 HOURS SEEMS CLEAR. WE ARE HOPEFUL, HOWEVER, THAT OUR ARGUMENTS FOR WHY FUTURE EFFORTS OF THIS TYPE WILL NOT BE HELPFUL DID NOT FALL ON DEAF EARS.
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